

*File: Rec Mgt
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Records Mgt Staff Management Staff

Portable Desk Trays

1. In accordance with our recent conversation we are furnishing a typical metal portable desk tray.
2. The portable desk tray was developed under the Records Management Program for the primary purpose of conserving space in safe-type file cabinets now used for overnight storage of current working papers. An initial supply of 1400 trays was procured for trial purposes throughout the Agency. The following reference material is furnished to provide additional background:
 - a. Memorandum dated 10 December 1954 to Chief, Supply Div., Logistics Office is attached, Incl #1, and provides background regarding the development of the tray.
 - b. Copy of the contract with specifications for the manufacture of 1400 metal trays is attached as Incl #2. The trays were manufactured by Acme Visible Records, Inc., and final delivery was completed 27 June 1955.
 - c. Sketch of the tray and the suggested method of utilization is attached under Inclosure #3.
 - d. Leaflet which was distributed when the trays were issued is attached under Incl #4, as well as actual photographs of the tray in use.
 - e. In order to obtain the opinions of personnel utilizing the trays, a questionnaire, Incl #5, was distributed to all components. A statistical summary of the results of the questionnaires is contained in Incl #6. Please note that 76.5% of the persons using the tray find it more convenient and 64% find it saves drawer space in safe file cabinets.
3. Typical statements in the questionnaires pointing to apparent defects and recommended changes in the tray were:
 - a. During one period a number of calls were received (14 within 10 days) by the Office of Security to open jammed safe drawers. It is presumed that the jamming was caused by the trays tipping as the drawer was being opened and the corners of the tray dug into the insulation on the roof of the safe compartment.
 - b. Corners of the trays should be rounded to avoid ^{jamming} desks.

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c. Since the color of the present trays practically resembles the color of most office desks, resulting in a possible oversight during a security check, it would be safer to devise a brighter color for future trays that are manufactured.

d. Suggest the use of polyethelene plastics in lieu of metal trays, which could be reinforced, if desired, by the addition of fiber glass.

e. Recommend that the spring latch be made stronger to avoid the possibility of trays suddenly opening when being carried.

f. The trays scratch desks, even when handled carefully. It was suggested that each corner of the tray be padded to prevent gouging holes in the desk. (Several dozen similar comments were received).

g. Present models are about $\frac{1}{4}$ " too long and do not permit the lock latch to engage the lock recess when the tray is placed in a safe. Consequently, you have to be careful when removing the tray from a drawer as the tray is likely to come apart.

h. The steel used in the tray is too thin; therefore, the walls are not rigid enough to bend which in turn causes defective operation of the catch.

i. Propose small rubber knobs instead of the present rubber strips; an adequate latching method (hasp, flip lock or longer peg); the lid should be of the same design as the bottom and it would still fit together as now.

j. If there would be one or two latches on each end of the tray, the trays would be far less likely to open unexpectedly.

k. The handle should be changed to a location centered on the top surface. This would prevent certain cases of jamming.

l. The trays should be slightly narrower to avoid jamming. The name plate scratches the desk.

m. Propose the trays be constructed of hard rubber, plastic or fibre-glass material; believe it would be cheaper.

n. The overlap on the edges is not enough, particularly if the tray is dropped or bent, and the two halves do not secure properly.

4. As stated in paragraph 2e, the majority of components found the tray more convenient and as a space saver in file cabinets. Typical statements were:

a. The tray is a valuable device for carrying papers to conferences.

b. Better security practice is afforded because the tray can be closed quickly if an unexpected visitor should arrive.

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c. The time saved in opening and locking up is considerable. Also, it is an efficient means of clearing the desk of classified papers in case of an actual fire or a fire drill.

d. The cost may be misleading because the metal tray undoubtedly well outlasts the wooden style.

e. The trays keep loose papers from falling from one safe drawer to the back of the drawer below. They lend an air of order and efficiency to the organization and easily earn their cost.

5. Our objective is to have a desk tray manufactured that would have greater utility than the present model, avoid marking of desks, and equipped with a latch system that would be completely dependable. We suggest the possible use of hard rubber, plastics or fiber glass for the construction of the tray. Also, in order that the tray may adequately fit the Herring Hall Marvin legal safes as well as Remington Rand safes, it is suggested that the outside dimensions be:

Height - 4"
Length - 15"
Width - 9½"

(It would, of course, be necessary to determine the demand throughout the Agency for a modified tray. It is realized that cost and production factors will largely depend upon the volume produced and our estimate at this time, without a survey, would be that 8,000/9,000 trays would be eventually needed.)

6. We will appreciate your assistance and suggestions on the above subject.



6 Enclosures:
Described in paragraph 2, above.

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